From: Simmons, Denise
To: Janey Bishoff
Subject: Re: Letter of Concern on an Important Upcoming Issue
Date: Tuesday, April 17, 2018 6:51:31 PM

Dear Ms. Bishoff,

Thank you for your email. So far, I have not yet seen an actual draft of the proposed resolution asking the City to cease purchasing HP equipment and supplies. I understand there's been a great deal of passionate discussion in the community about this matter – yet I must underscore that this will only appear on the City Council's April 23 agenda if one or more City Councilors sponsor it. We will not know if it is on the agenda until either a City Councilor publicly declares that they'll be sponsoring this (to my knowledge, this has not happened), or until the agenda is finalized by the Clerk's Office and posted online this Thursday evening around 5:30 pm. I can, at the very least, confirm that *I* am not a sponsor of such a resolution.

There have been numerous op-eds, emails, and social media posts condemning the City Council for rushing this to a vote without adequate opportunities for the public to weigh in, or even giving people a chance to read the resolution. Some people have condemned the City Council for seemingly being on the brink of passing this resolution, or for seemingly being on the brink of rejecting it. While I understand the passion behind this matter, I must clarify that we do not yet even have a resolution or policy order in front of us, there has been absolutely no debate about this amongst the City Councilors, and the City Council will not have an opportunity to discuss this amongst ourselves unless and until a resolution is sponsored by at least one of us and introduced at a public meeting. At this point, I am not yet certain if such a resolution will be introduced or not.

I appreciate your reaching out and sharing your views on this. I am currently reading up on this issue to be better informed, I am reviewing all the emails and letters coming in about this issue, and I am reaching out to our representatives in Congress to seek their input on an issue that is more international than municipal in scope. Should this matter end up on before the City Council – either on April 23 or at a later date – I will look forward to engaging in a thoughtful discussion and debate with my colleagues on the Council and then seeing how to best resolve this matter in a way that allows everyone to feel they have had a fair chance to be heard. Thank you.

E. Denise Simmons

From: Janey Bishoff <JBishoff@bishoffcommunications.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2018 12:57 PM
To: Simmons, Denise
Subject: Letter of Concern on an Important Upcoming Issue

April 17, 2018

Councilor E. Denise Simmons

Cambridge City Council
Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA

Dear Councilor Simmons:

As a longtime Boston area resident, an MIT alum, and a former planner working in Massachusetts state government, I know that Cambridge is a positive community, a leader in democratic values, and is considered a welcoming beacon of inclusion -- not only for citizens here in Massachusetts, but for people who come to Cambridge from across the country and throughout the world.

I am deeply concerned and dismayed hearing that the Cambridge City Council is considering a resolution to support a **boycott of HP** for doing business in Israel or with Israel's government.

There are many reasons that it is inappropriate for the City Council to become embroiled in such an issue. Most importantly you are opening yourselves up to being perceived as Anti-Semitic, given that the group behind this effort, the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement is, in the words of its leaders, dedicated to Israel's destruction, and further fuels hate and polarization, giving credence to those who reject the co-existence of Palestinians and Israelis.

I certainly hope that you reject this hatred and are aware of the many leaders, from the left, right, and center, who reject BDS, including former President Barack Obama; Senators Bernie Sanders, Cory Booker, Ed Markey, and Elizabeth Warren; Representatives Keith Ellison, Michael Capuano, and Joe Kennedy, former Senator John Kerry, former Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick, and all 50 governors.

I also understand that the City established a special relationship with Dongguan, China. Unfortunately human rights abuses against laborers in Dongguan's toy industry not only exist, but are well-documented. Therefore, you are also opening yourselves up to being called out as hypocritical by supporting the boycott of a company doing business with Israel, when you have made special efforts to reach out to a government that allows such human rights abuse.

Finally, there are many companies based in Cambridge, which do business in countries around the world with poor human rights records. It is likely that some of these companies also do business with the City of Cambridge and/or support the Cambridge schools and worthy non-profit organizations that help your citizens. Is the City Council going to support a boycott of those companies as well? This could put such support at risk – not to mention the tax revenue derived from such companies when they consider expansion, lease renewals, or relocation.

I hope that as Cambridge City Councilors you will continue to be leaders for all citizens and that beacon for democratic values by standing up for thoughtful leadership and high standards and reject the idea of supporting this boycott.

Sincerely yours,

Janey Bishoff

Janey Bishoff

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